

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9569

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

UNCLAS NATO 5301

E.O. 1652: N/A

TAGS: NATO, SP

SUBJECT: PRESS ARTICLE ON SPAIN/NATO

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STORY BY DAVID HAWORTH, DATE-
LINED BRUSSELS, WHICH APPEARED ON PAGE 4 OF SEPTEMB-
BER 29 INTERNATIONAL HEARALD TRIBUNE UNDER HEADLINE
"SPAIN SEEKS ASSOCIATION WITH NATO"

BEGIN QUOTE: SPAIN IS APPLYING DISCREET DIPLOMATIC PRES-
SURE ON NATO TO PERSUADE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS THAT THE
COUNTRY SHOULD BE GIVEN AN ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP IN
THE ALLIANCE, ACCORDING TO NATO SOURCES HERE.
IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT BOTH THE UNITED STATES
AND WEST GERMANY FAVOR SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WITH SPAIN
IN PRINCIPLE.
NORWAY, DENMARK, THE NETHERLANDS AND
BRITAIN, HOWEVER, ARE ALL OPPOSED TO IT ON THE GROUND
THAT THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT IS THOUGHT TO BE STILL
INSUFFICIENTLY DEMOCRATIC.

DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT IN RECENT
WEEKS AMONG NATO OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED IN
A LOW KEY, BUT HAVE EXPOSED AN HONEST AND FUNDA-
MENTAL DIFFERENCE OF VIEW ABOUT HOW THE ALLIANCE
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SHOULD RESPOND TO AN ANTICIPATED FORMAL REQUEST

FROM MADRID FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP.

A NATO SPOKESMAN TODAY DENIED THAT THE ALLIANCE WAS "SPLIT OPEN" OVER THE ISSUE. HE SAID SUCH A DESCRIPTION WAS AN EXAGGERATION. DIVIDED VIEWS

BUT IN WASHINGTON LAST MONTH NATO SECRETARY-GENERAL JOSEPH LUNS ADMITTED THAT THERE WERE DIVIDED VIEWS ABOUT THE ALLIANCE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH SPAIN. DESPITE THIS, HE ADDED, "QUITE A FEW MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE WOULD NOT BE READY TO CREATE SPECIAL LINKS BETWEEN SPAIN AND NATO".

MR. LUNS IS REGARDED AS ONE OF THOSE WHO STRONGLY FAVOR SUCH A MOVE. THE RECENT POLITICAL UNCERTAINTIES IN PORTUGAL AND ITALY HAVE MADE IT IMPERATIVE, IN HIS OPINION, FOR THE ALLIANCE'S INFLUENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA TO BE STRENGTHENED.

THIS OUTLOOK IS CERTAINLY SHARED BY U.S. OFFICIALS AT THE ALLIANCE HEADQUARTERS, WHO ARE ANXIOUS ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF THE SPANISH LEFT'S STRENGTHENING ITS HAND IN PREPARATION FOR PROMISED GENERAL ELECTIONS IN SPAIN, SCHEDULED FOR JUNE, 1977.END QUOTE
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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